

Alderney – Wildlife & History in Style

Naturetrek Tour Report

13 - 17 June 2019



Great Green Bush Cricket – photo John Horton



Western 'Blonde' Hedgehog- photo John Horton



Cream spot Tiger moth – photo John Horton



Glanville Fritillary – Photo John Horton

Report and photos compiled by John Horton



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Tour participants: John Horton & Annabel Finding (Leaders) with 16 Naturetrek clients

Day 1

Thursday 13th June

Arrival was on time and after the group had settled in at the hotel, we gathered on the balcony overlooking Longis Bay. Getting straight into the recording, we saw Buzzard, Rock Pipit (looking at the identification features between it and Meadow Pipit) then White Wagtail, talking through the differences between it and Pied Wagtail. Below us a variety of wildflowers included Sea Holly and Ribbed Melilot.

First stop was lunch at the old barn where a fine male Greenfinch perched for all to enjoy observing our arrival. We moved on to Braye harbour to a known spot for Bee Orchid, where around 15 plants were well photographed by the group.

Next our afternoon walk took us along Clonque Bay. A breezy afternoon saw some 50 species of wildflowers recorded including White Stonecrop, Carline, Slender and Spear Thistles. A male Stonechat presented itself and we also watched a White Wagtail feeding two recently fledged chicks. At the end of our trail we were lucky to find a Glanville Fritillary sheltering out of the wind. Other wildlife spotted along the way were Brown-tail moth caterpillars and a Thick-legged Flower Beetle.

Day 2

Friday 14th June

Starting at Telegraph Bay a pair of Skylarks displayed very close to the group heading to and from a likely nest. A male Stonechat also showed very well close to the footpath amongst good numbers of Linnets and Meadow pipits. Three Ravens passed overhead just before we reached a spot where a pair of Dartford Warblers busily gathered caterpillars feeding them to young in an out of sight nest buried amongst the gorse bushes.

Next we headed into town and the popular Alderney museum. An hour swiftly passed before we took lunch at Jack's Brasserie in St. Anne's.

The sun joined us for our afternoon session so we dropped in at Alderney allotments hoping to find butterflies taking advantage of the conditions. We were not disappointed, with the group finding Holly Blue, Painted Lady, Speckled Wood, Glanville Fritillary, Red Admiral and Common Blue all in close proximity.

Our afternoon walk was along the NE coastline between Longis Bay and Mannez lighthouse. Straight off we located a migrant Whimbrel which eyed us from the near shoreline before flying away calling loudly. We added another butterfly, Small Heath, along with a variety of shoreline wildflowers including Small-flowered Catchfly, Rock Sea Lavender and the sought-after Alderney Sea Lavender, now beginning to flower and looking at its best. A Green Bush Cricket along with hundreds of Field Crickets were also seen along the scenic footpath looking out across to France just eight miles away.

A highly popular afternoon tea and cake was taken at the Old Barn restaurant ahead of our last stop at the Alderney bird observatory. The Nunnery building set within the walls of a Roman fort is the home of ornithological research on Alderney and at arm's length we were treated to a bird ringing demonstration by John

the ABO warden. We saw the delicate and expert handling and ringing of Reed Warbler, Blackcap, Goldfinch and several Great Tits. Back at base we did our species log as a group before a hearty meal.

Day 3

Saturday 15th June

Our first stop this morning was at the bird observatory at 0800 to meet local moth expert David Wedd in order to see the contents of the moth trap. The highlights were a *Convolvulus* Hawkmoth and four Cream Spot Tiger moths.

After a hearty breakfast at the hotel John located two unseasonal Sandwich Terns in Longis Bay that we obtained great views of through the telescope from the hotel breakfast balcony overlooking the bay, just in time before the birds headed on their way.

Next it was up to Fort Albert, a fine viewpoint from which Annabel pointed out the historical and local points of interest. A yacht race was coming in along the coastline to Alderney from Cowes and we were able to watch the competitors racing into Alderney harbour and across the finish line. Also, here we added Meadow Clary, Viper's Bugloss and a Kestrel.

We took the local train from Braye Road to Mannez quarry for a BBQ and here the group were led to a location where the beautiful Yellow Bartsia grows and many plants were flowering. The local newspaper reporter caught up with us wanting a shot of the visiting Naturetrekkers!

We walked from Mannez quarry where another Glanville Fritillary was very obliging for photos, then to Arch Bay where we located Sea Spurge, Sea Rocket and Sea Holly.

Day 4

Sunday 16th June

Having obtained a better understanding of Alderney over the past few days, our team gathered in the exclusive hotel cinema to watch the poignant WWII Alderney war years videos. These films are a collection of how the Alderney story unfolded told through interviews with those who lived through it.

Lunch was at the popular Jack's Brasserie in town and from there we went straight to the harbour to embark on the much-anticipated boat trip to see the Puffin and Gannet colonies. The Puffins were as usual enormously enjoyed ahead of the spectacle of the magnificent 3,000 pair Gannet colony. During the boat trip we watched a pair of Peregrine falcons over the south cliffs, a Grey Seal made a brief appearance and close to our round island journey's end two Manx Shearwaters were seen.

The last evening's dinner at the hotel was followed by yet another outing to try and see a local celebrity that has received almost mythical status, the blonde Hedgehog. It didn't take long to locate the mammals and over the next hour we saw five 'blondes' and a regular brown Western Hedgehog. Using our bat detector, we saw three Common Pipistrelle bats and with the buzz of buoyant chatter from the Naturetrekkers returning to the hotel on the minibus our day had ended close to midnight.

Day 5

Monday 17th June

After checking out of the hotel we headed down to Longis common. A Little Egret passed overhead as we made our way to the Naturetrek sponsored hide. Butterflies frequented the path and flitted amongst the Sea Radish, with several Small Heath and Meadow Brown along with a couple of Glanville Fritillary. Looking to the north-west we spotted a movement of around 20 Swifts. From the hide the pair of breeding Little Grebe showed well and several dragonflies were amongst the Amphibious Bistort. Lunch was at the fine Georgian Hotel and there was time for a couple more stops en route to the airport. First we visited Platte Saline beach to see some flowering Yellow Horned Poppy and also here were Sea Kale and Hare's Tail Cotton Grass.

Lastly, stopping in the Bonne Terre valley at a picturesque wildflower meadow we added yet more blooming variety; Long-headed Clover, Corn Chamomile and Musk Thistle. The last find of the trip was a cracking male Great Green Bush Cricket.

We arrived at the airport in plenty of time for our flight back to the UK mainland after a splendid short holiday exploring this fascinating island.

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Species Lists

Birds (✓=recorded but not counted; H = heard only)

	Common name	Scientific name	June				
			13	14	15	16	17
1	Common Shelduck	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>		2		2	
2	Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>					2
3	Common Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>		2		2	
4	Northern Fulmar	<i>Fulmarus glacialis</i>				5	
5	Manx Shearwater	<i>Puffinus puffinus</i>				2	
6	Northern Gannet	<i>Morus bassanus</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
7	Great Cormorant	<i>Phalacrocorax carbo</i>		1		1	
8	European Shag	<i>Phalacrocorax aristotelis</i>	6	10		10	1
9	Little Egret	<i>Egretta garzetta</i>		3			
10	Little Grebe	<i>Tachybaptus ruficollis</i>					2
11	Common Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	3	2		2	2
12	Eurasian Coot	<i>Fulica atra</i>					2
13	Eurasian Oystercatcher	<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>	30	50		5	✓
14	Whimbrel	<i>Numenius phaeopus</i>		1			
15	Atlantic Puffin	<i>Fratercula arctica</i>				120	
16	Razorbill	<i>Alca torda</i>				70	
17	Common Guillemot	<i>Uria aalge</i>				120	
18	Sandwich Tern	<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>			2		
19	Black-headed Gull	<i>Chroicocephalus ridibundus</i>					2
20	Lesser Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus fuscus</i>	100	130	✓	✓	✓
21	European Herring Gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	✓	40	✓	✓	✓
22	Great Black-backed Gull	<i>Larus marinus</i>	2	4	✓	6	2
23	Stock Dove	<i>Columba oenas</i>					1
24	Common Wood Pigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		2	6	✓	5
25	Collared Dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>			1		
26	Common Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>					25
27	Common Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>					1
28	Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>				2	
29	Western Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>		1			
30	Carrion Crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
31	Northern Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>		3			
32	Great Tit	<i>Parus major</i>	2	7			4
33	Eurasian Skylark	<i>Alauda arvensis</i>		3			
34	Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
35	Common House Martin	<i>Delichon urbicum</i>		2			
36	Common Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>	H	H			2
37	Eurasian Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>	H	3			H
38	Common Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>	2	H			1
39	Dartford Warbler	<i>Sylvia undata</i>		3			
40	Eurasian Reed Warbler	<i>Acrocephalus scirpaceus</i>		1			H
41	Eurasian Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	H	3			H
42	Common Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	1	7		2	2
43	Common Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>	1	3		1	2
44	European Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	2	2		1	2
45	European Stonechat	<i>Saxicola rubicola</i>	1	3		1	2
46	House Sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	2	✓	✓	✓	✓
47	Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>		2			2

	Common name	Scientific name	June				
			13	14	15	16	17
48	White Wagtail	<i>Motacilla alba</i>	3	5		2	2
49	Meadow Pipit	<i>Anthus pratensis</i>		30		40	25
50	Eurasian Rock Pipit	<i>Anthus petrosus</i>	1	1		4	2
51	Common Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	1	1			H
52	European Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	2	3			2
53	Common Linnet	<i>Linaria cannabina</i>		20			10
54	European Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>		3			10

Mammals

1	Atlantic Grey Seal	<i>Halichoerus grypus</i>				1	
2	Western Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>				6	
3	Common Pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>				3	
4	European Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>				10	

Other

1	Blue Jellyfish	<i>Cyanea lamarckii</i>				1	
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Butterflies

1	Large White	<i>Pieris brassicae</i>					1
2	Small White	<i>Artogeia (Pieris) rapae</i>					3
3	Holly Blue	<i>Celastrinas argiolus</i>		6			
4	Common Blue	<i>Polyommatus icarus</i>		4			10
5	Red Admiral	<i>Vanessa atalanta</i>	2	2			1
6	Painted Lady	<i>Cynthia cardui</i>		1			
7	Meadow Brown	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>		10		1	10
8	Speckled Wood	<i>Pararge aegeria</i>		10			5
9	Small Heath	<i>Coenonympha pamphilus</i>		1			20
10	Glanville Fritillary	<i>Melitaea cinxia</i>	1	1			3

Moths

1	Brown-tail	<i>Euproctis chrysorrhoea</i>	200				
2	Clancy's Rustic	<i>Caradrina kadenii</i>			1		
3	Cream-spot Tiger	<i>Epicallia villica</i>			4		
4	Cyprus Carpet	<i>Thera Cupressata</i>			1		
5	Heart and Club	<i>Agrotis clavis</i>			1		
6	Heart and Dart	<i>Agrotis eclamationis</i>			14		
7	Hummingbird Hawkmoth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>					1
8	Jersey Tiger	<i>Euplagia quadripunctaria</i>			1		
9	Lackey	<i>Malacosoma neustria</i>			3		
10	Large Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua pronuba</i>			3		
11	Lychnis	<i>Hadena bicurris</i>			2		
12	Maple Prominent	<i>Ptilodon cucullina</i>			1		
13	Marbled Minor agg.	<i>Oligia strigilis agg.</i>			12		
14	Orache	<i>Trachea atriplicis</i>			1		
15	Privet Hawkmoth	<i>Sphinx ligustri</i>			1		
16	Scarce Footman	<i>Manulea complana</i>			1		
17	Setaceous Hebrew Character	<i>Xestia c-nigrum</i>			1		
18	Shoulder-striped Wainscot	<i>Laucania comma</i>			3		
19	Shuttle-shaped Dart	<i>Agrotis puta</i>			1		

	Common name	Scientific name	June				
			13	14	15	16	17
20	Small Square-spot	<i>Diarsia rubi</i>			2		
21	Small Yellow Wave	<i>Hydrelia flammeolaria</i>			1		
22	Vine's Rustic	<i>Hoplodrina ambigua</i>			5		
23	White Ermine	<i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>			3		
24	Willow Beauty	<i>Peribatodes rhomboidaria</i>			1		
25	Yellow Shell	<i>Campptogramma bilineata</i>		1			1

Other Insects

1	Field Grasshopper	<i>Chorthippus brunneus</i>		200			
2	Great Green Bush Cricket	<i>Tettigonia viridissima</i>					1
3	Thick leeged flower Beetle	<i>Oedemera nobilis</i>	1				
4	Red tailed Bee	<i>Bombus lapidarius</i>	2		10		
6	Buff tailed Bee	<i>Bombus terrestris</i>	1	50	2	✓	✓
7	Common Carder Bee	<i>Bombus pascuorum</i>		4			
8	Large Carder Bee	<i>Bombus muscorum</i>		1			

Dragonflies

1	Emperor Dragonfly	<i>Anax imperator</i>					5
2	Blue tailed Damselfly	<i>Ischnura elegans</i>			1		

Plants

Scientific Name

LEPTOSPORANGIATE FERNS

Aspleniaceae

Asplenium scolopendrium

Dennstaedtiaceae

Pteridium aquilinum

DICOTS

Aizoaceae

Carpobrotus edulis

Amaranthaceae

Apiaceae

Crambe maritima

Crithmum maritimum

Daucus carota

Eryngium maritimum

Foeniculum vulgare

Heracleum sphondylium

Araliaceae

Hedera helix

Asteraceae

Achillea millefolium

Bellis perennis

Carlina vulgaris

Cirsium vulgare

Leucanthemum vulgare

Senecio jacobaea

Sonchus oleraceus

Taraxacum agg.

Tripleurospermum inodorum

Common Name

TRUE FERNS

Spleenwort Family

Hart's-tongue Fern

Bracken Family

Bracken

DICOTYLEDONS

Dewplant Family

Hottentot-fig

Amaranth Family

Carrot Family

Sea-kale

Rock Samphire

Wild Carrot

Sea-holly

Fennel

Hogweed

Ivy Family

Common Ivy

Daisy Family

Yarrow

Daisy

Carlina Thistle

Spear Thistle

Ox-eye Daisy

Common Ragwort

Smooth Sow-thistle

Dandelion group

Scentless Mayweed

Scientific Name	Common Name
Boraginaceae	Borage Family
<i>Anchusa arvensis</i>	Borage
<i>Echium vulgare</i>	Viper's-bugloss
Brassicaceae	Cabbage Family
<i>Cakile maritima</i>	Sea Rocket
<i>Cochlearia officinalis</i>	Common Scurvygrass
<i>Lobularia maritima</i>	Sweet Alison
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i> ssp. <i>maritimum</i>	Sea Radish
Campanulaceae	Bellflower Family
<i>Jasione montana</i>	Sheep's-bit
Caprifoliaceae	Honeysuckle Family
<i>Lonicera periclymenum</i>	Honeysuckle
Caryophyllaceae	Pink Family
<i>Cerastium fontanum</i>	Common Mouse-ear
<i>Silene dioica</i>	Red Campion
<i>Silene latifolia</i>	White Campion
<i>Silene uniflora</i> (<i>vulgare</i> ssp. <i>maritima</i>)	Sea Campion
<i>Spergularia rubicola</i>	Rock Spurrey
Chenopodiaceae	Fat-hen Family
<i>Beta vulgaris</i> subsp. <i>maritima</i>	Sea Beet
Convolvulaceae	Bindweed Family
<i>Calystegia sepium</i>	Hedge Bindweed
<i>Calystegia soldanella</i>	Sea Bindweed
Crassulaceae	Stonecrop Family
<i>Umbilicus rupestris</i>	Navelwort
Ericaceae	Heather Family
<i>Calluna vulgaris</i>	Heather
<i>Erica cinerea</i>	Bell Heather
Euphorbiaceae	Spurge Family
<i>Euphorbia paralias</i>	Sea Spurge
<i>Euphorbia peplus</i>	Petty Spurge
Fabaceae	Pea Family
<i>Cytisus scoparius</i> subsp. <i>maritimus</i>	Prostrate Broom
<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>	Bird's-foot Trefoil
<i>Medicago lupulina</i>	Black Medick
<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	Ribbed Melilot
<i>Trifolium pratense</i>	Red Clover
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover
<i>Ulex europaeus</i>	Gorse
<i>Vicia sativa</i>	Common Vetch
Gentianaceae	Gentian Family
<i>Centaureum erythraea</i>	Common Centaury
Geraniaceae	Geranium Family
<i>Erodium cicutarium</i>	Common Stork's-bill
<i>Geranium dissectum</i>	Cut-leaved Crane's-bill
<i>Geranium robertianum</i>	Herb Robert
Lamiaceae	Dead-nettle Family
<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>	Ground Ivy
<i>Mentha aquatica</i>	Water Mint
<i>Mentha suaveolens</i>	Round-leaved Mint
<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>	Hedge Woundwort
<i>Teucrium scorodonia</i>	Wood Sage
<i>Thymus polytrichus</i>	Wild Thyme

Scientific Name**Malvaceae***Lavatera arborea**Malva sylvestris***Onagraceae***Epilobium montanum**Oenothera glazioviana***Orobanchaceae***Euphrasia* sp.*Orobanche minor**Orobanche rapum-genistae***Papaveraceae***Fumaria muralis**Glaucium flavum**Papaver rhoeas***Plantaginaceae***Plantago coronopus**Plantago lanecolata**Cymbalaria muralis***Plumbaginaceae***Armeria maritima***Polygonaceae***Persicaria amphibia**Rumex acetosa***Primulaceae***Anagallis arvensis**Primula vulgaris***Rosaceae***Potentilla erecta**Potentilla reptans**Prunus spinosa**Rubus fruticosus***Rubiaceae***Galium aparine***Salicaceae***Populus alba***Sapindaceae (Aceraceae)***Acer pseudoplatanus**Lycium barbarum**Solanum dulcamara***Urticaceae***Parietaria judaica**Urtica dioica***Valerianaceae***Centranthus ruber***Veronicaceae***Cymbalaria muralis**Veronica chamaedrys**Veronica persica***Violaceae***Viola canina***MONOCOTS****Amaryllidaceae***Allium triquetrum***Common Name****Mallow Family**

Tree Mallow

Common Mallow

Willowherb Family

Broad-leaved Willowherb

Large-flowered Evening Primrose

Broomrape Family

Eyebright sp.

Common Broomrape

Greater Broomrape

Poppy Family

Common Ramping-fumitory

Yellow Horned-poppy

Common Poppy

Plantain Family

Buck's-horn Plantain

Ribwort Plantain

Ivy-leaved Toadflax

Sea-lavender Family

Thrift

Knotweed Family

Amphibious Bistort

Common Sorrel

Primrose Family

Scarlet Pimpernel

Primrose

Rose Family

Tormentil

Creeping Cinqufoil

Blackthorn

Bramble

Bedstraw Family

Cleavers

Willow Family

White Poplar

Maple Family

Sycamore

Duke of Argyll's Teapant

Bittersweet

Nettle Family

Pellitory-of-the-wall

Stinging Nettle

Valerian Family

Red Valerian

Speedwell Family

Ivy-leaved Toadflax

Germander Speedwell

Common Field Speedwell

Violet Family

Heath Dog-violet

MONOCOTYLEDONS**Allium Family**

Three-cornered Leek

Scientific Name**Araceae***Arum maculatum***Iridaceae***Iris foetidissima***Orchidaceae***Anacamptis pyramidalis**Ophrys apifera***Poaceae***Phragmites australis**Heracleum mantegazzianum**Lysimachia maritima**Ranunculus acris**Ononis repens**Carduus tenuiflorus**Digitalis purpurea**Limonium normannicum* Rottingdean*Limonium binervosum**Salvia pratensis**Anthemis arvensis**Papaver dubium**Carduus nutans**Parentucellia viscosa**Silene gallica**Eriophorum vaginatum**Euphorbia portlandica**Iris pseudacorus**Vicia sepium**Vicia hirsuta**Symphytum officinale***Common Name****Arum Family**

Lord's-and-Ladies

Iris Family

Stinking Iris

Orchid Family

Pyramidal Orchid

Bee Orchid

Grass Family

Common Reed

Giant Hogweed

Sea Milkwort

Meadow Buttercup

Rest-harrow

Slender Thistle

Foxglove

Alderney Sea Lavender

Rock Sea Lavender

Meadow Clarey

Corn Chamomile

Long Headed Clover

Musk Thistle

Yellow Bartsia

*Small flowered Catchfly**Hares tail Cotton Grass**Portland Spurge**Yellow Flag Iris*

Bush Vetch

Hairy Tare

Comfrey

Alderney Sea Lavender – *Houme herbe* – photo John Horton

Yellow Bartsia – photo John Horton